

CONFIDENTIAL

Classification

Enclosures

Record Section File No.

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For Record Section Only

MILITARY INTELLIGENCE DIVISION
WAR DEPARTMENT GENERAL STAFF

MILITARY ATTACHE REPORT Argentina

RECEIVED 1940

Country Reported On

Subject Military Information Synopsis - Bahia Blanca. I.G. No. 1220
Brief Descriptive Title (Additional)

Source and Degree of Reliability:

Personal Contacts.

Summarization of Report

When Received

Ref. Disp. #6347, Sept. 19, 1940. This report furnishes additional information which was not available when September report was made. Map with locations marked is attached for checking with that forwarded under dispatch #6347.

In Comments on Current Events Enter Item Headings Here

15. f. Plotted on this map.
i. Schools plotted with capacity noted.
l. Newspaper plants plotted.
p. Plotted.

17. La Nueva Provincia, oldest newspaper, morning daily, owned by a corporation, members of the Julio family control the stock. Democratic in political views - Pro-Ally.

El Atlantico, Morning daily owned by Jose Maria Perez Bustos, conservative in local politics; Pro-Ally.

El Censor, Evening daily, owned by Guillermo Scheverin, is reactionary and Pro-Nazi. It is reported that Bahia Blanca's No. 1 Nazi - Diego Meyer, prominent hardware merchant, virtually dictates the policy of this paper.

Democracia, Evening daily owned by Luis E. Vera. Radical in domestic politics and pro-Ally.

La Gaceta, Evening daily. Independent politically, pro-Ally.

Pan, weekly, circulates among Spaniards, pro-Franco, non-committal as to present war.

Nuevos Tiempos, weekly, Socialist and pro-Ally.

Hispano, weekly, same as Pan but of lesser importance.

Crónica, weekly, democratic and pro-Ally.

Régimen, weekly, only local comment.

Punta Alta.

El Regional, Evening daily, liberal and pro-Ally.

La Nueva Comuna, weekly, local interest only.

Ingeniero White

La Obra, weekly, radical, pro-Ally.

El Puerto, weekly, socialist, pro-Ally.

18. Luis M. Harrington, acting mayor under Federal intervention of the province of Buenos Aires. Well-to-do landowner, third generation Irish-Argentine. Speaks English but generally avoids doing so. Not particularly congenial with foreigners, but not unfriendly.

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From M. A. Argentina Report No. 6511 Date February 11, 1941.

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1220.

Teófilo Salustio, maritime subprefect with jurisdiction in the entire port area which embraces Arroyo Parejas, Ingeniero White, Puerto Galván and Cuatrereros with headquarters in Ingeniero White. He is retired naval officer over 70 years of age. He is an old school Latin American political appointee. The Great Southern Railway gives him a "Christmas Gift" of one thousand pesos each year, the only such "gift" to any local official. Ordinarily he claims to be a democrat but frequently intoxicated "confides" in that condition that he is Fascist at heart. He is irregular in office attendance and highly inefficient but must be treated with great care.

Rear Admiral Gastón Vincendeau, chief of the Argentine Naval Base at Puerto Belgrano which lies geographically but not administratively within the corporate limits and port area of Bahía Blanca. He is French-Argentine first generation, appears cultured, a tactful officer and gentleman, speaks English and French besides Spanish. Unlike most officers at the base he admires England and dislikes dictators.


Octavio Lucero, collector of customs, cold and difficult to approach. Reported to be Fascist.

Miguel Pascuzzi, manager of Bahía Blanca branch of the Banco de la Nación Argentina. Italian-Argentine. Very friendly to the United States and sympathetic with the democratic cause.

19. Carl B. Luikart, manager of Compañía Nativa de Petroleos, S.A. (Standard Oil Company refinery). Born in Nebraska, educated in Louisiana. Wife also native American. Twelve years in Bahía Blanca. Daughter married to Argentine naval officer stationed at Puerto Belgrano.

William Kaser, assistant manager of West India Oil Co. (Standard Oil Company sales organization). Born in Argentina of American parents. Educated in the United States. Two years in Bahía Blanca. Wife is native American.

Fred C. Marks, assistant manager International Harvester Company. Native American. Wife also native American. Three years in Argentina, two in Bahía Blanca.


M. A. Devine, Jr.,
Colonel, U.S.,
Military Attaché.

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Record Section File No.

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For Record Section Only

MILITARY INTELLIGENCE DIVISION
WAR DEPARTMENT GENERAL STAFF

MILITARY ATTACHE REPORT Argentina

Country Reported On

Subject Vital Areas - Province of Cordoba

I. G. No. 1180

Source and Degree of Reliability:

Personal reconnaissance and contacts

Summarization of Report

When Required

RECEIVED G/2 W. G. MAR 10 1941

In Comments on Current Events Enter Item Headings Here

General.

The second most important military area of the Argentine Republic is the Cordoba and San Luis mountain district, as it furnishes the first strong defensive position west of Buenos Aires and will eventually contain the bulk of the military manufacturing installations.

Passing west from the Province of Buenos Aires, there is no important defensive position until the Chilean border is approached. To the north-west there is no military obstacle until the Cordoba hill district is encountered, which is roughly some six hundred (600) kilometers by air line from the federal capital. Generally the land to the west from the Atlantic coast is a flat pampa resembling the plains of Kansas and Nebraska; but upon reaching the Cordoba hill mass, the character of the country abruptly changes to a rugged mountain area.

The hill mass proper generally extends from north to south. The northern extremity commencing within the Gobernación of Santiago del Estero to the general area of Villa Mercedes in the Province of San Luis is an extent of some five hundred (500) kilometers.

The road net from the Atlantic generally converges from south to north at Villa Mercedes, and from east to west at Villa Mercedes and Cordoba, and from east to northwest at Villa Mercedes, Cordoba, and Santiago del Estero. The railroad net approximates these locations.

Railroads.

The city of Cordoba, situated in the center and eastern extremity of the mass, has a population which is estimated to be 275,000. It is a railroad center and railroad repair division point and is adequately equipped for repair work of all classes.

The mountain district is well connected by narrow gauge roads (one meter), which belong to the State Railway system. The passenger

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From M. A. Argentina

Report No. 6531

Date February 27, 1941

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accommodations are both steam and Diesel operated. The Diesel equipment, which is modern, has seating accommodations for one hundred sixty-eight (168) passengers, a freight section for ten (10) or fifteen (15) tons, and a small baggage section. The steam equipment is obsolescent and, generally speaking, in poor repair. Freight throughout the area is transported by freight, gondola, and tank cars varying in capacity from 11,500 to 13,700 kilos. The steam locomotives are fueled by wood, and the Diesel equipment by crude oil.

The railroad beds throughout the area are in fair condition and suitable for the present traffic, but would require reballasting to carry heavy military loads. The railroad bridges have not too great a safety factor, and would require reenforcing for military loads, but in an emergency the train could be split to provide a safe transit.

Railroad bridges in general are built with a stone approach and a steel span of some thirty (30) to fifty (50) feet to cross the deep but narrow arroyos. Much of the road bed is laid along the side of the mountains, which would permit of easy sabotage operations.

Rock is plentiful throughout the area, but means for crushing would have to be provided.

Air Transport.

Cordoba possesses an excellent army air base and three good fields, but unfortunately lies to the east of the hill mass. Fields could be constructed within the hill area in many places but the problem of rail supply would be complicated. However, it is possible to bring oil and gasoline in from the north by narrow gauge roads and deliver same as far as Dique (D-5) even though the city of Cordoba were in hostile hands.

Roads.

(See complete road maps previously furnished, and attached map - which is believed to be the latest detailed map of this district.) All roads within the mountain area are of rock or macadam with an excellent rock base, well drained, and of a general width of from sixteen (16) to eighteen (18) feet. Due to their construction, they would be able to stand fairly hard truck traffic throughout all seasons of the year. The road bridges are in general a fifteen (15) ton type, of wood or reinforced concrete construction (see enclosed photographs).

Water.

The supply of water depends upon the season. In a wet year they have sufficient; in a dry year it is a problem. It is stated that throughout a period of years twenty (20) days of rain is a winter average, while during the dry season only periodic storms assist in the replenishment of the supply. It is stated that there is an underground stream at a depth of about ten (10) feet, but this sheet can only be tapped at infrequent points. The dependable wells go to a depth of approximately two hundred seventy (270) feet. In general the stream courses are dry arroyos during the summer season, but it is stated that there is water at a reasonable distance beneath the surface. Hydraulic power throughout the area is most variable, so that all ^{hydro}power installations must be augmented by Diesel generating stations. All drinking water within the area should be chlorinated.

Fuel.

Coal and oil are not found in this locality. Wood is restricted to scrub growth; wood for cooking must be brought in from the northern provinces. Fuel oil is transported into the area by tank car or truck.

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Climate.

Extremes of heat and cold are encountered. During winter the valleys have some snow, which averages from six (6) inches to one (1) foot in depth but rarely remains for any length of time, i.e., for more than six (6) to ten (10) days. The crest lines are usually covered with snow of varying depths during the winter season and the temperature averages about forty degrees (40°); during the summer the temperature averages about eighty-five (85°). The air is generally dry, which accounts for the large number of tuberculosis sanatoriums found in this area.

Billeting.

The numerous barrios could provide accommodation for from two companies to half a regiment of infantry, if the population were evacuated; however, units would be somewhat dispersed. Building construction is generally of stone, native brick, and adobe. Due to the fact that water is said to run close under the shale surface, it is believed that extreme care would be necessary to provide against pollution. Intestinal disorders are not infrequent when strangers enter this area for the first time.

Food Products.

Fruits such as pears, apples, grapes, plums, and apricots are raised in the mountain valleys in limited quantities. Corn, wheat, and alfalfa are found in the lower valleys and pampa areas. Cattle, sheep, and horses are raised throughout the district, but the supply of milch cows is strictly limited.

Clothing, Arms, Equipment.

The troops stationed within this area would require overcoats, slickers, wool undershirts, and heavy blankets during winter; while in summer, cotton clothing and one blanket would be quite adequate. The campaign hat would be serviceable for all seasons. Foot and horse troops should be equipped with heavy marching shoes due to the rocky character of the terrain. All personnel should be provided with sun and dust goggles, and climbing staffs should form a part of the equipment of foot troops.

Any force sent to this area should be well provided with howitzers and mortars, both motorized and pack type. It should be generously equipped with automatic weapons and explosives of all types. Combat engineers would be particularly valuable.

Tactical.

It is not believed that this vicinity could be taken by a frontal attack if determinately defended. It could be turned only from the north and south flanks by difficult marches over areas with inadequate water supply. The strategic importance of this area is recognized by the Argentine Government, which envisages the eventual location of the main supply and military manufacturing agencies within this region. At present the national airplane factory is located at Cordoba, and the most important powder factory - which is not functioning yet - is situated in Villa Maria. The artillery ammunition factory, also in process of construction, is located in Rio Tercero. Unfortunately, when some of their installations were laid out, the danger of an attack from Chile appeared to be more important than an attack from the Atlantic, which accounts for the fact that these important factories have been located to the east of the mountain barrier. However, I understand that in future planning the bulk will be located to the west.

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Due to the fact that previously separate reports have been submitted on Railroads, Arsenals, Air Base, Air Fields, etc., these items are not included in this report.

Enclosures:

- 1 plotted map - Córdoba
- 1 general map "
- 1 Railway & highway map - Argentina
- 5 Motor route strip maps
- 20 Photographs

M. A. Devine, Jr.
M. A. Devine, Jr.,
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Enclosures
2042-199
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Record Section File No.
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RECEIVED 6/2 W.D. FEB 5 1941
MILITARY INTELLIGENCE DIVISION
WAR DEPARTMENT GENERAL STAFF
MILITARY ATTACHE REPORT Argentina
Country Reported On

Subject Characteristics of the Population I. G. No. 2100
Brief Descriptive Title

Source and Degree of Reliability:
Personal contacts.

Summarization of Report
When Required

Is Comments on Current Events Enter from Headings Here

Custom is a guiding principle either for good or evil which affects the daily life and actions of the government, the family and the individual.

Tradition has only a negative influence as Argentina lacks tradition; possesses no outstanding national hero (San Martin, who belonged to many countries, excepted), has never had a great war, a great victory, but suffered a humiliating defeat at the hands of Paraguay; has never contributed to science, the arts, government or world progress; what is good in the republic has been brought by foreigners who have immigrated to the country, but not thru the genius, sweat, toil, perseverance, daring or pioneer spirit of the native born Argentine. They as a nation are well aware of these facts which accounts for the national inferiority complex and obstructionist tactics particularly evidenced in their dealings with strangers, foreign companies and governments.

As a race Argentines do not exist. They are a huge conglomeration dumped into a melting pot but have never melted or blended. Due to the large percentage of south Italian, Galician(Spanish), Polish, Bulgarian, and Near East blood which intermarried with the Indian, the worst traits of both peoples were accentuated. The higher type(the ruling class) can be traced,almost without exception, to British, German and French blood lines, and these, unfortunately, form an infinitesimal portion of the population; but thru association, environment, business and social competition have absorbed many of the characteristics which we as Americans despise. For the reasons stated above it is difficult to generalize on the Argentine.

Temperamentally they are characteristically Latin, excitable, stubborn when crossed, have no hesitancy about resorting to trickery, misrepresentation, and prefer to close their eyes to facts which are disagreeable rather than to take energetic action to correct the same unless when party or social politics are involved. It is nationally

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From M. A. Argentina..... Report No. 6493..... Date January 27, 1941.....
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characteristic to blame foreigners and foreign governments for all economic, financial or political ills, and to dislike to admit that any unpleasantness might in some small measure be attributed to their own shortcomings. In political life they are nationally dishonest, condone graft when it does not go too far (such as the purchase by a government agency of 14 or 15,000,000 padlocks) wink at petty thievery and consider it *vivo* (clever). The country is cursed with petty thieves.

Respect for authority and law is almost totally absent. As an example, the city of Buenos Aires was forced to remove the traffic lights because the people refused to obey the signals. Individual license is rampant and people with political influence do about as they wish.

Politics is a profession and a well paid one. This accounts for the number of "repeaters" in the national government, in major political positions and nepotism. The "states" are jealous of their prerogatives and the leading political figures are constantly plotting to gain more state power or to gain a prominent national position, which leads to continued political juggling, scheming, secret meetings at estancias, etc; national disunity and disorientation in national policy. As a national character remarked to me: "We would not dare to have state troops such as you keep in the United States".

The Argentines are nationally inefficient; bound by bureaucracy and red tape which is necessary to prevent the national income being diverted to the private fortunes of the governing class. It is a general observation that state governments are markedly inefficient, extravagant and honeycombed with graft and fraud which, when no longer bearable, is seized upon by the opposition which forces the chief executive to replace the government by an interventor who has absolute power and is accountable only to the President, and whose tenure of office is determined but not pre-determined by the Executive pleasure. At present three provinces are governed by interventors with a strong likelihood that two more will be added to the list. At this writing it is my belief that there is a marked trend toward centralization and that within the coming year additional provinces will be brought under the Federal yoke by one means or another.

The country is unquestionably radical but the federal government conservative, that is for the time being.

The Argentine is definitely nationalistic in its dealings with foreign governments but the bonds of party allegiance (radical or conservative) are stronger than the nationalistic ties. For example: there are no strong bonds between the people of Corrientes and those of Buenos Aires, and it is my belief that the inhabitants of the provinces would be as contented under the Brazilians, Chileans or Uruguayans as under the Buenos Aires government, provided they were able to enjoy religious freedom sell maize and beef at a profit and engage in political scheming.

Due to antecedents, the large percentage of south Italian, Galician (Spanish), Polish and Near East blood the population lacks moral stamina and intestinal fortitude of the Anglo Saxon, American, German and some of the Central American subdivisions. It is the opinion of the undersigned that they would collapse under adversity and could be overrun by a small first class fighting force with comparative ease.

From M.A. Argentina.

Report No. 6493.

January 27, 1941.

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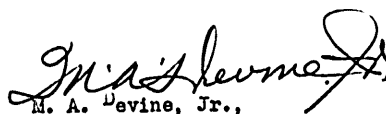
Cunning and trickery supplants intelligence as a national characteristic. The present and the tangible only count; the profit must be immediate, and every undertaking must provide personal profit, prominence or power. There are no Henry Fords, Rockefellers, Edisons or Carnegies in Argentina.

Courtesy, hospitality and consideration for others are, as a national characteristic, non-existent except in isolated cases. Within the family and among close friends they are unfailing. There are gentle people in all lands, so they are to be found in Argentina. Nationally, Argentines are arrogant and bullies.

As regards physical endurance and courage they are definitely inferior to the Guatemalans, Nicaraguans, Colombians and Paraguayans and are rated by the British Military Attaché below the Chileans and about equal to the Brazilians.

The country suffers from an acute inferiority complex, so for this reason is arrogant in its dealings with foreigners who are not friends, is suspicious of foreigners and foreign governments; is capable of changing front over night and nationally is "opportunist".

Once an accepted friend their hearts are open, what they have is yours (provided you don't take it), courtesy is unfailing and their company is charming. However, it is a hard road to this friendship and along it the stranger must go 100% of the way.


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All copies airmailed Jan. 29th.